

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2002

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications Unit of the South African Radio League and is responsible for providing emergency communication in times of distress or national disasters to local and regional authorities, when requested to do so.

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HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Sunday morning kicks off with Hamnet KZN at 07H15 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz by Wally ZS5WP.

Followed with the national Bulletin on 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz by Martin ZS6MSG. In Gauteng, 145,700Mhz is also used for a local transmission. The time is 17h00 local during summer months and 16H30 during winter months.

Next we have Gauteng North. Their bulletin is read on Tuesdays at 20:30 local time to accommodate those who are in church on a Sunday evening. The frequencies are 145,725MHz and either on 7,070MHz in the 40M band or 3,695MHz in the 80M band.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Last but not least is Hamnet Western Cape Province with a bulletin on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, Read by Andrew Perrins, ZR1SBM and relayed by Matt ZS1MJJ on 3,674MHz.

Whatever you missed please access the S.A.R.L. Website under the heading "Hamnet News - regularly updated", for the latest news or if you are on Packet, it will have been sent to you thanks to Rudi ZS6DX.

DECEMBER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

We are again approaching what is commonly known as the "silly" season namely the December/January holiday season.

Schools across the country close on Friday the 6th of December, which will be one of the days which we request HAMNET monitors around the country to monitor our emergency frequencies.

The dates and weekends that will be critical are as follows; Friday the 6th of December and that whole weekend as many people will start their various journeys over that weekend.

The weekend starting Friday the 13th is next as Monday the 16th is a public holiday. I also understand that Friday is when builders start their break.

Next we have Friday the 20th. This is probably going to be the busiest weekend as all who have not left on holiday, will leave on this day or over the weekend.

The following two weeks are true holiday weeks.

The 3rd of January 2003 is the first weekend when many motorists will start their journeys home. Schools start on the following dates; Gauteng, Free State, Mpumalanga, Northwest and Limpopo all start on the 15th of January. The balance of the Provinces starts on the 22nd.

The major freeways are in good condition. The N3 from Johannesburg to Durban is in excellent condition and has been resurfaced in some places. Be aware that building operations are in progress down Towns hill on the northern side of Pietermaritzburg.

We have already had confirmation from at least one Province that a special road information centre will be in operation. Johan, ZS4ZR in Bloemfontein has informed us that an information centre will be available at the Ultra City service station as you pass Bloemfontein. Should there be other HAMNET operators setting up vantage point cum information point stations, please let me know the dates you will be running those stations.

The N2 from Durban to Port Edward is also in good condition. Since the section beyond Hibberdene was opened up, it has made driving to various destinations on the lower South Coast a pleasure. It's when you get off the freeways that your troubles really start with traffic jams.

We again appeal to all operators, especially in the 40M Band to follow the correct procedures and allow us to monitor 7,070MHz without any problems. Please keep your transmissions short and leave reasonable pauses for operators to give their call signs should they have "traffic".

WESTCON CYCLE RACE - A BIT OF LOCAL NEWS

Sunday 3 November started very early for a few HAMNET members around the Johannesburg area. It was the annual Westcon Cycle Race, which was run over 3 sections. Thirty-five kilometres, 70 kilometres and 105 kilometres.

There were 4 water points, a base station at the Roodepoort Sport Stadium, one control station and 2 roaming vehicles to pick up broken cycles etc.

There were a few accidents of which at least 3 needed ambulance attendance. Traffic police took one lady to a hospital in Randfontein. We contacted her husband on his cell phone to advise him of the incident but fortunately she was not too seriously injured.

We are aware of at least 2, and probably more, Amateur Radio Operators who participated in this morning's event. They were Steve Baynes ZS6XU and his wife Andrea, ZS6VXN. Steve's communications vehicle was also used as a base

unit from where we had communications not only around the three circuits, but also with the organisers.

A good exercise from a communications point of view. There were many incidents that needed accurate information to be communicated. Also my thanks to all HAMNET operators who made good use of this event to not only learn but also sharpen up communication skills.

My thanks also to the West Rand Club for the use of the 145:625 repeater at times and a special thanks to the 145:650 repeater (Club at this stage unknown). This repeater offered an unbelievable footprint and we could cover the whole cycle event area through this one repeater. This repeater has recently been moved to a new location, which is proving very effective.

EMERGENCIES LOCALLY AND AROUND THE WORLD

As we talk, Italy is still counting the cost of not only a few violent earthquakes on Sicily but also Mt. Etna erupting and causing a great loss of life. Roads and landscapes have been changed forever due to flowing lava.

Locally, we had a few bomb blasts last week, which caused at least one death and disrupted Metro rail in the greater Soweto area.

Two squatter camps gutted within 48 hours in the Western Cape area.

There is a looming famine starting just across our northern border and stretching all the way up to the horn of Africa - unless help is forthcoming.

The United States is in the grip of their annual twister season with devastating effects. Winter is setting in and the East Coast can very often be severely affected. We often tend to forget about Canada. Their winters can be just as severe.

And so the list goes on.

Please be prepared as a HAMNET member. You never know when it's our turn to render emergency communications to either a local or national body.

Bulletin ends.